चाहिये कि जब पूरा कार्य पूर्ण हो गया है, "इंटक" के लोग धरने पर बैठे हुये हैं तो इस मिल को तत्काल चालू कराना चाहिये । मेरा निवेदन यह है कि केन्द्रीय सरकार तत्काल ऐसा निर्देश जारी करे जिससे इस मिल को तत्काल चालू किया जाय, रूई खरीदी जाय, कपास खरीदा जाय और उसे मिल को दे दिया जाय जिससे मिल चालू हो सके और पिछले 6–7 वर्षों से इस मिल के चालू होने की प्रतीक्षा जो वहां के मेहनतकश मजदूर कर रहे हैं, उनकी उस प्रतीक्षा का अंत किया जाय । धन्यवाद ।

DISCUSSION ON THE WORKING OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION—(*contd.*)

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. A. BABY): Now we resume our discussion on the working of the Ministry of Civil Aviation. Mrs. Margaret Alva did not complete her speech on the last occasion. She will continue now.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA (Karnataka): Mr. Vice-Chairman, I got grounded halfway through and just like the Airbus it has taken quite some time for me to get back on my feet, because my speech was half-finishd; no, not half, just started rather. It is on record.

Without going back to what I had said on that day I would like to say that for an airline to work, I think the morale of those who run the airline is extremely important. And from what I have seen over the last few months unfortunately decision-making seems to have become a bad word as far as the administration in the airline is concerned; because, as I was telling the Minister during lunch outside and if I may repeat it here, I said, "you people don't seem to get used to the idea of being in Government and we don't seem to get used to the idea of being out of Govrnment; for the simple reason that in this whole debate we have seen that most of the Members on this side have been defending the Civil Aviation Ministry talking about its achievements and talking about all the good things that have happened while most of them sitting on that side who should have been talking about the achievements of the Ministry and talking about all the good it has done, have been criticisng and condemning all that has been done. Sir, this is a very strange situation in which they are not doing their job and they think that they have to continue to do the job of the Opposition. But I would like to say that..

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. A. BABY): This will happen whenever a change of Government takes place.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: But six months is a long time for them to get used to the idea of being positive because, I think, no Government, as I have been repeatedly saying, is elected to undo and to condemn. People elect the Government to work, to function and to show positive action. But all that they are saying is: आप लोगों ने यह किया, यह नहीं किया, हम लोग इसको हटा रहे हैं, उठा रहे हैं, पता नहीं किस को तोड़ रहे हैं। But the unfortunate thing is that at at least they should realise that if this Airlines which has been built with the effort, the sweat and blood of hundreds of people for the last so many decades, has got to restore the faith of the travelling public, in its capacity to respond to the needs of a country as large as a Continent, restore the faith

of the travelling public, the passengers and the international community, in its capacity to deliver the goods, to provide safe travelling facilities and also efficiency, then I think I don't need to tell a dynamic Minister like Mr. Arif Mohd. Khan who seems to be an authority on everything, that he has got to restore the faith of his own men and women in the Civil Aviation Ministry, in the Airlines, in your administration, in your Boards. Their faith in themselves can deliver the goods. Once you start condemning a group of people, suspect them of being associated with the previous Government, with the previous administration, with the previous Board, with the previous Commissions and ommissions and if this is the kind of feeling (which I know exists) —I also meet a lot of people from the Airllines, from your staff, the feeling of demoralisation which has reached a stage when most of them would like to get out and say: "we damn you, we will go and work somewhere else". I am not saying this as one party to another. I am saying this as an Indian to another, because I think these are the national airlines. We have no competition. we have been proud of Air India. we have been proud of the Indian Airlines with all its shortcomings—we are not saying that they are perfect—but, Sir, I see also a sinister move, when the Airlines in the past was very small, was not such a profit-making proposition, nor was popular, and so on, then it was all public sector: मनी लगा दो, एक्सपेंड करो, सब कुछ करो। Now it has reached a stage when this year the Air India has the highest profit ever made. I saw such a report in the Press yesterday or the day before yesterday. I suppose I can trust the Press report I am quoting. My point is that when it has taken off, when the air fields are everywhere, when the infrastructure has been created, and so on, there is a very powerful lobby in the country, within the Civil Aviation circles and outside, which says that you make it a private sector undertaking, there must be decentralisation, there must be competition, let private people come in and let there be a sufficient amount of competition. I am not talking of smaller aircraft. Their investment can be left to smaller people. But in this craze for change let us keep it away. I think this is something which we have got to resist. I know there were powerful lobbies even when we were in Government, suggesting that the Airlines should now be privatised. I think it would be a disaster if we try to do it. But I would also like to go a little further, Sir, and say that just undoing everything that has been done is not going to help you, is not going to help your Ministry, the Airlines or the entire infrastructure, nor will it help the country.

Sir, I may also tell you that I have flown A-320. I know a lot of your flying staff because at one time I was their advocate in the Supreme Court. And they do talk. I asked a person as to what was happening about the new Airbus. One of your Supervisors just turned and told me with some others present: "Madam, we don't even know how to operate it." Okay. It was a new aircraft which had just come. But if you in the cabin tell the passengers that you don't know how to operate this or operate that, then immediately we are nervous. My point is that if they have reached a stage that they don't care about the morale of the travelling public, and in any case everybody is condemning this, so let us also codemn this. then this is a very unfortunate situation, I am not holding a brief for anybody. I am not an expert in aircraft or in its plus or negative points. After all, there were technical people. There are technical

[Shrimati Margret Alva]

people who are giving evidence, who are saying that there is nothing wrong with Airbus A—320. Yes, there was a crash. It was in my home-town. I have seen the tragedy of the whole thing. I am not, in any way, minimising the need for safety. But I would like to ask, "how many crashes there have been of Boeing Aircraft, of Dakotas and of other aircraft? How many crashes were there of the Air India Jumbo Jets? Did you, at any time, ground the enttire fleet because there was one crash?" The other day, there was fire on an Air-India plane when it was landing at Delhi. Did we ground all of them? Let us be honest and let us be objective when we judge air safety. I am a part of the flying public though Parliament pays for me. I am as much interested in landing safely as anybody else. But the question is: Do you have with your information to say that the aircraft is not air-worthy, is not safe? Is it fair that because of one crash you should ground all of them? Maybe you have political motives behind it. That is another question. You want to show that everything the previous Government did was wrong and particularly so because the then Prime Minister happened to take interest in Civil Aviation; because he happened to know something about Civil Aviation; because, as you say, he was associated with decision-making. So is the present Prime Minister associated with decision-making because it is the decision of the Cabient. All Ministers not one or the other Minister, including the Prime Minister, takes the Cabinet decision. So, to say that an individual was responsible, an individual was irresponsible, an individual had other considerations, an individual had secret considerations, secret negotiations, is not good. I would request you to consider that Rs. 2500 crores of the tax-payers' money have been invested. If you say that the aircraft is rubbish, let the Committee that you have set up come before you and give you a report. You have made a statement that you will not take any decision to fly the aircraft again before the Court of Inquiry has given its final report. Though the final report has not comes with your permission, I am just quoting three or four sentences of the evidence which is coming before this Committee. The final report might be anything. Nowhere is it mentioned in the evidence that a situation has cropped up in which it can be said that the aircraft is junk or it is useless or it is beyond us. I am quoting from the Bangalore hearings. I have got the entire report of the Bangalore hearings . But I am not going into it. It says: "Late Capt. Fernandes who was flying the Airbus-320 which crashed at Bangalore airport on February 14 killing so many persons was on his *first route check* as a Pilot-in-Command." This is the evidence. This was the first route check of this Pilot. It also goes on to say that Capt. Fernandes was one of the Pilots who was exempted from the minimum 100-hours of flying experience required for being designated as a Pilot-in-Command. Are these facts correct? That means in the cockpit, during the crash, was a Pilot who was exempted from the minimum required hours of flying before taking command and also that it was his first check route in in the cockpit. It means that there is every possibility that the Pilot, on training in his first check route, did something wrong. This is coming out repeatedly. It is said that it was Pilot error. But let the report of the Court of Inquiry come.

Sir, I would like to go further. Here is the evidence of Capt. Sargaonkar before the Inquiry Commission. He says: "A-320 was not (I emphasise "was not") too sophisticated and from his experience, he was comfortable while flying

in it." He says: "He did not think that the changes made in A-320 as compared to other aircraft made it difficult for adaptation for any Pilot." And, of course, then he has gone to say that he had issued a circular to all the piots that the only thing to be careful about was the acceleration during take off because it was slightly slower than the other aircraft ...

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH (Maharashtra): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I am on a point of order, if my hon. friend, Mrs. Margaret Alva permits. It is a matter which is before a Commission of Enquiry...

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: This is a public document.

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: If you permit me, it is a matter which is before a Commission of Enquiry presided over by a High Court Judge. It is not yet complete. The judgement or whatever the decision is not out.

SHRIMATI MAGRAET ALVA: that is my point.

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: And would it be proper from a larger national point of view to discuss or debate in a manner in which the hon. Minister has to make a commitment which affects it? I am not sure whether you know the background.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI (Maharasthra): They have already grounded the aircraft.

SHRIMATI MARAGRET ALVA: Sir, this is my point. The Enquiry is going on. This is the evidence which is being published in the papers. It is not a secret or a closed door enquiry. I can go and sit, and I can form my own impressions. My question, therefore, to the hon. Minister is: Is it fair—and this is what Mr. Suresh Kalmadi raised earlier—for the Government who said the aircraft will not fly until the final report of the Court of Enquiry is out, to announce it? Of course, one of your hon. Members, a very influential Member who should be knowing what is happening within the Government has stood up and congratulated the Government on its decision already. From the replies in Parliament which the hon. Minister has been giving, I have been reading that, they have taken a decision to sell four aircraft. They have taken a decision to lease the rest of the aircraft. My point is this. Your assurance to the Parliament and to the people was that 'we will not let the aircraft fly or take a final decision until the report of the Court of Enquiry comes.

But, from the beginning everyone of you was saying that it is useless, we do not want it, it is not secure. I can undersand if after the Report comes you say that in view of all that is happening and the information that is coming, we are taking steps to get rid of the aircraft. My point is, when the court of enquiry is still looking at it and the pilots are themselves coming and saying that it is not unsafe, we have found nothing wrong with it, it is properly functioning, you decide to lease the aircraft, to sell the aircraft, and to get rid of the fleet without waiting for the Court of Enquiry to say whether it is air-worthy and how did the crash take place and what happened. This is where I am asking the hon. Minister: How are you taking these decisions in such a hurry, in such a haste when no final report has come? You are going purely on presumptions. And I may tell you that you have trained your pilots with such a huge amount. They are sitting back. There was a question. In fact, yesterday there was an answer that as far as cargo is concerned, we are not able to meet our international commitment-

And you have said, 'we do not have enough aircraft; we are far behind in international cargo transport.' Okay. Until you have them, you could have used some of these. You just have to remove the seats. You can use them for some domestic routes or something else. My second point is this. If this aircraft , you say, is not safe, how is it that you are getting so many Governments, so many airlines prepared to take them on lease at such exorbitant rates? If it is junk, do you think they are not interested in the safety of their people or their trvelling public? There is no question of maintenance. I know enough. For six months or one year, you do not have the maintenance problem.

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN): Who is saying that it is junk?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: If you say that it is not good enough for us, if you say that it is not safe for us, how is it...

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : Have I said it?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Then there must be some other considerations, other than the security of the public...

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: I will tell you.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA:... and the security of the citizens which you are claiming. Then there must be other reasons involved in leasing and selling in such a hurry. What the reasons are, may be when the next Government comes, they will start explaining. But that is not the point at the moment. My simple question is: What is the justification for disbanding an entire fleet which has been acquired at tremendous cost for which the public exchequer has paid? You are selling it; you are getting rid of it, And as you know, Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, when you sell and get rid of it, knowing the demand of the travelling public, it immediately involves new buying, new orders, new negotiations and everything else that probably he thinks will follow with the new deal to be nogotiated by him. That is all. I am not making any further comments on this. But there is one interesting point which I am asking the hon. Minister. Everything was said. Stones were thrown. Mud was thrown. When we ask for details, that crucial file is missing. Frist. you made all the charges. You made the charges without looking at the file. Then, you were looking for the file. We know that the file was moving here and there. Suddenly, one fine day, the nation is told, because it became inconvenient कि वह फाईल हो बस गुम हो गई। What is happening in the Ministy? Was there a fire in the Civil Aviation Ministry. Wherever it is inconvenient, files are supposed to get burnt. What is happening? When you mae charges. there are no fires. But when it comes to presenting the picture fully and totally before the people 'Well, these are the documents you demanded' but the file is missing. I would like to ask. We have all been in Ministries. Somebody had asked the other day, from the other side. 'You do not know where it had moved; who took it; where it had gone; but how it had disappeared; you just tell the nation that the file is missing'. What is the impression you create? When you do not want to answer questions when they become rather uncomfortable to you, or, not according to what you thought would be, the file goes. The answer is given. फाईल हो नहीं है ।

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: You are a very good lawyer, I must say.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: I am glad that you admit at

least that, though not a 'good politician'. The question had been asked: 'Why did you go for the A-320?'. Suresh also used to ask, I was told. Everybody had been asking. I am not at all pleading the case of Boeing or Airbus or any other company. To me, it is all the same. I want to say that there are also other considerations in an airline decision that you do not want to be serviced by one country or one aircraft company. Boeing we have had for a number of years. I do not want to say much. But there were situation when spares were not made available to us when we needed them most. There were times when we did not get the necessary equipment which we wanted. We also know that when tension developed in the relations between us and the United States, the Boeing company played a very dubious game. Mr. Raja Ramanna will know more; at what stage, what had happened, when the nuclear fuel issue came. Various things happened. I am not referring to them here. Everybody knows. What I am saying is that there were very clear political considerations for diversification and not depending only on one company. We wanted to go to the Continent. The French came. It was a good offer. It was considered and accepted. You can ask 'Why did you not buy all the aircraft from Boeing?' Or, 'Why only from Boeing; why not from others?' When you buy something else, the question would be 'Why did you give up Boeing'? You can go on asking questions all the time. One can ask 'Why are you wearing a green saree and not a red saree?' One can ask 'Why should Mr. Arif Mohd. Khan be the Civil Aviation Minister and not Prof. Madhu Dandavate?' These are questions which you can ask all the time. 'Why this?' and 'Why not that?'

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE): Green and red have ideological orientations.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Only saffron is left out.

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Green and orange will go well. (*Interruptions*). When it comes to 'uncivil aviation', you can have Dandavate.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: All I am saying is that to read motives into the Airbus purchase is wrong.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: We have not.

SHRIMTI MARGARET ALVA: Everything is politicalised. When you buy an aircraft, it is politicalised. When you buy an engine, it is politicalised. I do not know what else will get politicalised. But I do not want to go into those details.

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Green and orange saree will get politicalised.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: You distract me. I cannot go on if he goes on talking. He is talking about sarees. I am talking about aircraft. Perhaps, he is talking about airhostesses,. (*Interruptions*) I am coming to airhostesses. Wait a minute. Don't be in a hurry.

Now, I have gone through the record. Several times it has been mentioned. We find that more than 90 Airbus A-320 are flying today.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: How many?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Five hundred are under order, to be cdelivered. Twenty-seven air lines are flying this aircraft and it has been certified as airworthy and safe by nine countries. The nine countries are: United States, Great Britain, Canada, Germany, France, Australia, Jordan and Cyprus.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: I will be obliged if she can disclose the source of this information.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Why should I? My sources are as well-protected as yours.

AN HON. MEMBER: This is from the missing file.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: I want to say that all the information that I got is from your Ministry and from very important people in your establishment.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Disinformation.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : This is not disinformation. You cut out any country from this and I will get you clarifications. (*Interruptions*)

This is information, not disinformation.

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH : Let the Ministery deny it.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : Then I would say that she should totally not rely on these sources.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : That shows how frustrated your Ministry people are, they have given wrong information altogether.

SHRI M. M. JACOB (Kerala) : The Minister may give the information only for the record purpose.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : I will give the exact information.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. A. BABY) : Please do not get distracted.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : It is very difficult. When these people are interrupting, you should protect me. They have been talking about atrocities on women for the last one week.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY (Pondicherry) : Madam, nobody will commit atrocity....

SHRIMATI MARGRAET ALVA : This is where Mr. Kalmadi also raised the question a little while ago that neither the Indian Airlines Board nor the technical committees on air safety, nor anybody else, have declared the aircraft to be unsafe and yet it is being leased or sold so that others may die and Indians may be safe, according to him, I suppose.

Now I come to passenger services.

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH : When are you coming to the air hostesses ?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : The question of reservation is something which bogs us all down. It is true, even at the Parliament House counter very often we have problems, not against computerisation but against the use of computers to mislead the people. Your ticket has been okayed. It is marked 'okay'. You go to the counter with an okayed ticket.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : But do not demoralise him.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : They say that your ticket is okayed but your name is not on the computer. Somebody has okayed your ticket, but it is not on the computer. Now how do I know who is supposed to transfer it from the counter to the computer ? (*Interruptions*). I am telling you that this has happened to people travelling with me. Their ticket is okayed

but their name is not there on the computer.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. A. BABY) : The hon. Member is only demoralising the computer.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : I do not know if she can speak against computer.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : I am not. (*Interruptions*). I am not joking about anything. Sir, I am only saying that very often I have seen that this is used as an excuse by the people at the counter for giving tickets and boarding cards to other people. I am telling you that I have seen this happening, especially with the people coming from the Gulf, coming from these places. They go to the airport and get stranded. I have seen it and those people say that they are demanding so many dollars to get my name on the computer. They are booked in advance. They have got confirmed tickets. but at the counters...

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY (Andhra Pradesh) : Where have you seen this happening ?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : I know who has asked you to ask me.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY : No, no. I am asking because I have also come across the same thing. I will tell you.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : I have seen this happening at Bombay airport, Cochin airport, at many other places. They have told me that they are demanding so much. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : I am agreeing with you.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : I am bringing this to your notice. Just because a Government changes, people at the counter do not become saints, not even when Mr. Arif Mohd. Khan is the Minister. So, better look into these complaints and set them right.

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह (बिहार) : आप लोगों ने इतना बिगाड़ दिया है कि इस राज में भी नहीं सुधर सकता।

श्रीमती मारग्रेट आल्वा : आप ठीक कर दीजिये, आप तो हैं न।

Sir, I also want to say that the question of over-booking and unloading is another real *tamasha* which goes on in the airlines. Very often you are told that you are over-booked and now so many passengers are to be unloaded. As if it is some kind of baggage, which when it becomes too heavy. you just unload. This is wrong. There must be some compensation given to people for this.

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH : Sometimes the baggage is reaching empty also.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : Sir, I have been a witness. When six people at the counter were asking for seats, they were told, no, there are no seats, the plane is totally booked. And when I went to the aircraft on the Bangalore flight I can tell you, that there were at least 30 to 40 vacant seats on that flight. And people were kept back. This happened to us in Calcutta. We were told that there were no seats and half the Airbus

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coming from Calcutta to Delhi was empty. We were coming back from the elections. I want to know what is the secret of a "full aircraft", an "over-booked aircraft" and an "empty aircraft". There must be somebody responsible for this kind of wastage of public transport when there is such a demand and such inconvenience caused to the passengers.

4 P.M.

The other thing which comes under him somewhere and which I do want also to mention, though I do not want to go into details, is the collusion between airlines and customs staff at various international airports. What happens and how things get past and how they come is something which, I am sure, you know as well as any of us does. Recently, on an international aircraft—it was not Air-India—the staff told me, "Madam, we dread landing in Indian airports" because, I do not know the technical name for that group which comes for fumigation, the advance group which gets on to the aircraft, such demands are made by the Indian staff who board the airlines for fumigation and other processes that they showed me a hamper ready for them with every thing, before they started the work on the aircraft. I would like you to carry out surprise checks on the staff that gets on board. They said, "We have kept this hamper ready to hand over". You have to be a little conscious about the impression which we give of ourselves as a nation at the international airports.

I know that green channels and other things have been introduced and things are moving much faster. But we are very poor judges because the moment they know we are M.Ps., then immediately there is a smile and generally a quick passage. But that is not what the public gets. I think we owe it to the people. Particularly I find the ones harassed the most at these airports are those people who are coming from the Middle East etc. They come with a transistor or some such thing with whatever they have saved, or a few belongings for their family after two or three years. They are harassed, they are charged and something is taken away from them, perhaps one transistor is taken away. This is really very unfortunate that the big fish get away while the small little flies get caught and harassed simply because they are not able to fight back and get their things through.

The other point which everybody has mentioned, but which I as part of the travelling public must mention, is the question of delays. Very often when I leave the house, saying "I am going to the airport", I always say, "God willing, if I do not have to come back" because you never know. You go there, Information is never correct. Enquiry counters are there. Probably they have not enough phones. They never tell you that the plane is three hours late. They will say, "Yes, it is on time". You leave at 5.30 or 6 in the morning and within 20 minutes or half an hour, they say, "We are sorry to announce a delay of one hour". They will not say, three hours or four hours, for you to come home and go back. Every one hour, they will announce further delay, still further delay, technical delay, or what other delay, we do not know. Nobody is able to give you an explanation. Nobody apologises. Of course, that word is not known in the Indian Airlines and Air India. But the point is that this kind of delay destroys your entire capacity to work for the rest of the day because you are just sitting around in the lounge cursing the airlines, cursing yourself and cursing every thing Indian. You do not know

what you are doing sitting in that place. Therefore, I would plead with you, sometimes the planes are delayed by 10 hours, 12 hours or 14 hours. If you cannot operate them, cancel certain flights, run them twice a week or thrice a week so that we would know, "Okay, on that day, it is going" and on the rest of the days we will stay back. But what happens is, you check in, you go there and for hours you are made to wait. Everybody thinks he is doing us a favour by allowing us to board the aircraft four hours or five hours later. I think the public relations, particularly of the Indian Airlines—Air-India's is much better—requires to be totally overhauled. I do not know what you were talking about new logos, new symbols or new paintings. That is not the point. The faith and confidence of the travelling public in the capacity of the airlines to deal with the pressure of the travelling public must be restored. That is the only way in which you will be able to restore the faith of the common people in the airlines.

I would also like to mention that one of the points in the matter of delay is the question of lack of base workshops all over the country. We have had cases where an aircraft goes up to Hyderabad and then they say that some part has to be replaced. But Hyderabad has no facility, Bangalore has no facility and it has to be flown in from Bombay. So, they have to either wait for the next flight from Bombay to bring it or some plane has to be diverted to bring that part and the technicians from there just to put an aircraft right. In the meantime we are made to sit or stand or sleep wherever possible, from 12 to 14 hours, waiting for a spare part to be brought. If you are expanding your fleet, you ought to have base workshops and you should have at least the required basic things at all the big airports. Even Calcutta doesn't have a base workshop—it is an international airport. I think I am right—they do not have it. Last time we were stuck up at Calcutta for 24 hours because they could not get some part. I just do not understand how you can have an expanding fleet without this kind of support. For that you don't need to start building a whole new building. You have got everything, but the facilities should be made available at all these places.

Sir, the last thing, for which Mr. Viren Shah was waiting...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI (Maharashtra) : He is not waiting any longer.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : . . . is the question of staff relations and the company's image vis-a-vis its own employees. Many points have been raised. For a long time I never used to speak about the air hostesses in the House because at one time I used to appear for them, and because of my involvement I never used to speak in the House. But that is a long ago story. I do want to ask the Minister today—he is a very chivalrous Minister and, at least because of the orientation of Mrs. Arif Mohd. Khan, who is a well-known lawyer, I am sure by now he knows the questions which were involved in this battle of the women cabin crew, of the air hostesses through the entire course. They say that the travelling public doesn't want women who look old. But it is okay if 58-year-old men are serving tea and coffee. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY : We also want young-looking men.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR (Uttar Pradesh) : Her objection is valid. It is an injustice to the ladies.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : Who says that ?

SHRI KAMAL MORARKA : Sir, on this subject there should be a separate discussion. This has nothing to do with aviation. This has to do with biology and physiology and so a separate discusion should be held on this. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : Please, let us not reduce it to a joke. There was a very senior Minister in this House at one time in charge of Civil Aviation—I am just repeating what had happened in the House. I raised this question at that time and he replied, "हम क्या करें अल्वा जी everybody wants young ladies to serve tea and coffee on the flights."

SHRI SURESH KALMADI : I am paying for it !

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : You are paying for it ?—I am sorry. You are paying for tea and coffee and not for the one who serves it ? ... (*Interruptions*)... Now, will you please listen to me? I asked him a second supplementary. I said, "Would you plase tell me the age of the lady who serves you tea and coffee at home every day ? Do you throw her out because she is past the age of 35 and get a younger one to serve you tea and coffee ?" He said, "Alvaji, if I answer this question, I won't get my tea and coffee from tomorrow. So, please don't ask this question." The point is, you say that women on the aircraft must retire at 35 because they are not...

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : No, I am not saying that.

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : इंटरनेशनल [illegible] है ?

श्रीमती मारग्रेट आल्वा : मैं भी पूछना चाहती हूं । I am finishing. I object to this being treated as a joke because it is a very serious matter. Let us not make every issue on women's employment a joke. I am talking about it in all seriousness.

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : यह जोक नहीं है । यह सवाल है जानकारी के लिये । आप सारी दुनिया में घूमती हैं (व्यवधान)

श्रीमती मारग्रेट आल्वा : मैं आज मंत्री नहीं हूं । वह मंत्री हैं, उनसे पूछिये ।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : आप इन्फारमेशन दे रही हैं, इसलिये मैंने इन्फारमेशन चाही कि आप थोड़ा बता दें ।

श्रीमती मारग्रेट आल्वा : अच्छा बता देंगे ।

Sir, I want to make two very clear statements on this. One is, there is discrimination between men and women in our national airlines. They say, women must retire early, men can go on to 58 whether they have false teeth or are bald or whatever they are. ...(*Interruptions*).... But, Sir, the women must retire at 35. I am today quoting for you.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH (West Bengal) : Madam Margaret, one correction. They have kept the same age, 58 years. (*Interruptions*) But now they are subjecting the women crew to medical check-up compulsorily from 35 to 55. But they are landing them at 45. They are not retiring them. (*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : My point was that earlier they had to go when they were 35. I am just quoting for you what the rule was on the rule-book. You will be shocked if you know

what the rule of the Indian Airlines was. It was that on marriage or pregnancy, whichever comes earlier —this was the rule—they will retire from the Airlines till we went to the court and I fought this. Of course, they came with some changes. Sir, they allowed them to go up to 45. (*Interruptions*) When we were in the Government, an announcement was made that this discrimination was going and that both would retire at 58. The Member asked about foreigners. The foreigners working in the Air India do not retire at 35: they retire at 58 because they are foreigners. They are governed by international rule, but the Indian air hostesses must retire at 35. The foreigners will go up to 58. This is what I was objecting to. Indians, you do not find good enough after 35 ! A foreigner can go up to 58. Are we less efficient ? Or are they more efficient ? Do they not age ? Or only the Indian women age ? I would like to know this from the hon. Minister.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : Will you yield for a minute I will have to reply in the end. But I feel that this is a very important question. I am not going to respond now to the other points which you have made. But this I feel is very important.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY : To others will you not respond ?

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : I feel that this is a very important question. Possibly I may not get time to reply today itself to the points which are being raised by the hon. Members. My reply may be tomorrow because at five o'clock another motion is to be taken up. That is why I have stood up because I feel that this is a very important question which the hon. Member, Shrimati Margaret Alva, has raised. I would like to assure the hon. Member that she need not convince me on this aspect.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : I am glad. Your wife has convinced you.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Why do you say "wife ?" Some other lady might have convinced him.

SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI : His wife is of the view that it should be 58.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : In fact, Sir, this was one of the first subjects which was taken up after the new Government assumed office. I am coming to the steps. We notified the decision which was earlier taken, but it was not implemented earlier. We notified it. We decided that this decision should be implemented.

Sir, the very idea that there should be discrimination based on sex of a person, is repulsive, and it should not be allowed at all. In matters of employment, I would like to assure the hon. Members again that no discrimination—I would like to repeat it "no discrimination" —whatsoever will be allowed in any of the Airlines under the control of the Ministry of Civil Aviation, and if certain old practices are continuing which are not in conformity with with this decision, we will do away with those practices.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : Thank you, Sir. Since you have given this assurance, now I can say what I wanted to say. I want you to know that even in February this year an order which has been issued by the Ministry...

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH : Even in March.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : ... in March, says that women may continue till 45 in flying duty, not grounded like the Airbus, but actually do flying duty as the cabin crew, up to the age of 45, provided

[Smt. Margaret Alva]

that they go through a medical examination every year after the age of 35 and are found fit. I would only ask you : why do you presume that men do not need medical examination and that they are perfectly fit ? Why should only women have the medical check-up ? (*Interruptions*) My point is : why for only women there should be the medical examination ? I am as interested in the health and well-being of the male cabin crew. I request the Minister let them also go through a medical check-up after 35 years of age. Let all of them have the same specifications. There are certain specifications of weight, so on and so forth of women. Would you please also consider the specifications to be set out for male cabin crew ? Please set up a committee which will decide on the specifications for male cabin crew. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : I am ready to accept the suggestion, if the hon. Member is ready to head that panel.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : I am. There is no problem. I will give you really what the travelling public likes.

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR : It is a very interesting proposal. They will see whether a man is fit or not.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : I am talking about the check-up part of it. What are the requirements ? You have specifications for women. You have for males also. I am not going into further details. I am very grateful that the hon. Minister has given the assurance. I may tell him before long if nothing happens I will lead a delegation of female cabin crew to him demanding this like my hon. colleague on the other side had done earlier. He went faster than me because I had gone there earlier. He took them to you. But I hope that you will keep your assurance and ensure that these discriminations which are really a slur on the capacity of Indian women to work equally with others in our Airlines, are put an end to.

With these words, I once again wish to say that this Ministry is a very important Ministry. It has very important tasks ahead of it. Let us not get bogged down with narrow sort of pre-conceived notions and believe that everybody who has worked for it in the past has done it with a evil motive or with something else or because of something else. Let us accept the facts that all sections, the employees, the travelling public, myself and all of us have got to work together to restore the faith of the public in the civil aviation infrastructure of our country, that we have to update and improve our facilities both on the ground and in the air; and most of all that much more needs to go into the training of the people who run various sections of this infrastructure, whether it be on the ground or in the air. I don't want to go into details, but you know that the requirements are. If there have been loopholes and shortcomings, it is for all of us to find answers and to make the Airlines not only the pride of the country, but our pride internationally as well.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH : I would add only one supplementary to what she has said. It is in the context of the Minister's reply. In fact, there was a meeting in the presence of the Managing Director of Air India. The same commitment, which the Minister just now has made, had been made by him in the presence of the representatives of the Air Hostesses Association. But after two days of that meeting, Air India had issued a circular subjecting the women air crew between the age of 35 and 45 to a compulsory medical check up and

after 45 years to compulsory landing. They will not be assigned the job on board. So, I want to know from the Minister very categorically whether after the statement which he has made just now, he will see that the circular, which was issued by the Indian Airlines and also by Air India, is withdrawn.

In regard to Vayudoot I have shown its service rules this morning to the hon. Minister. They still contain obnoxious provisions.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI : There is no rule in Vayudoot.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH : That is why I want that he must see to it today or tomorrow that an order is issued to cancel those circulars which have been issued by Air India and the Indian Airlines.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : All these are matters of detail. What I said is we would not allow any discrimination based on sex. I have further said, if there are any practices which are not in conformity....

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : And rules. Not only practices.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : O.K. ....any practices or rules which are not in conformity with the announcement which I have made, we will ensure that they are done away with.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M.A. BABY) : Shrimati Renuka Chowdhury.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI : Talk about air-hostesses.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Why should talk about air-hostesses? Let us talk about male-stewards.

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : आप हिन्दी में अच्छा बोलती हैं । हिन्दी में बोलिये ।

श्रीमती रेणुका चौधरी : मगर मुझे अंग्रेजी मे बोलना है ।

Sir, much has been said about the Ministry of Civil Aviation and half the spirit and half the fervour with which all of us were involved in this debate fizzled out a little bit because of the time l lapse that took place because as you keep speaking then people relate so much more to it.

Sir, let us view Civil Aviation in the true perspective. I would like to break it down. What is the nature of air travel today? Some Members have even said "Do we need Aviation? Do we need such a large financial allocation for a small Ministry like this? Why do we need Aviation in a country like ours?" We need it because it is not meant for passengers alone. We need it for cargo. We need it for transportation. We need it for transportation of perishable commodities. We are opening the flood-gates for tourism. We are bringing in vital foreign exchange. We are buying essential goodwill. We are establishing India on the international map and Civil Aviation Ministry of this country is by no means a Ministry that should be viewed as anything but an all-important link between us and the other countries. A colleague of mine in the opposite Benches has said in the morning "A smaller aircraft, the Vayudoot is a symbol of national integration." For a minute I thought he was saying that the Vayudoot was the Congress-doot. The concept of Civil Aviation definitely opens up the floodgates. So revenue allocations, expenditure, whatever we give to the Ministry of Civil Aviation, none of us are going to dispute it.

Then, we come down to the profile of the user. Who uses the Airlines? When the fare hike took place recently, a lot of people on an average at the airports, at the booking counters whom I have met said "क्या फर्क पड़ेगा" । It is only the people, the Members of Parliament who fly and

[Smt. Renuka Chowdhury]

the businessmen who can afford to fly. So that makes no difference. The Government pays for you." Where does the Government get the money from? Who is the person who flies in this Airline? The Indian citizens, pepple who go for pilgrimage. The man who goes to *haj*. The man who goes to Kanyakumari. The people who go on pilgrimage to Tirupati. The person who needs medical aid. Someone who is going for surgery. People who wait for the unfortunate body of the lost one. The Airline flies them in. They bring...

श्री राम प्रवेश सिंह : अपर हाई क्लास....

श्रीमती रेणुका चौधरी : कौन सी क्लास है मैं बताऊंगी । आप रुकिये ।

These are the people, the average Indians who sometimes travel. Most people cannot afford flying. I agree. There is a target audience whom Airlines attract. Why is it so? Because we are hiking our tariffs. If we were to bring them down, more people would fly. Then, it is no longer a luxury mode of transport. Let us not view the Airlines or the concept of flying as a five-star culture as a friend of mine has said. When you equate it with the time factor, then, flying becomes a necessity. The target audience flying today in India are people who are productive, people who are contributing to the production centres of this country.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Why your voice is so low?

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Are you hard of hearing?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: It is not fair.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: We have to view the basic concept of Civil Aviation. This is a consumer-oriented service and since Prof. Dandavate Ji is here, through him, I would pass on a note to his Home Ministry that this should be brought under consumer service. This service of flying, the Railways, are essential services and the average consumer is being cheated of his fundamental rights over these services. What is the consumer looking for in a product like this? What is it that they are promoting not just in Indian Airlines but in any Airline? The fundamental concept that we promote is safety.

[The Deputy Chairman in the Chair]

Nothing else precedes safety that when a person boards an aircraft, he is 300 per cent sure barring any other thing that he is going to reach his destination because they have the confidence, they have back-up system, they have the support system, they have the instrument landing system, they have no fights between two pilots who do not want to talk to each other and hence they do not do their checking when they land and they crashland. They land because their landing gear was not locked. They did not do that because h they wanted to talk to each other. So, the fundamental concept that the average consumer looks for is first safety and second reliability. I do not want to confuse safety and reliability.

MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE (Maharasthra): We are not the only persons who fight. Men also fight with each other.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Yes, of course. That is a propaganda that they put against women. (*Interruptions*). Reliability means that when I ring up the airport or the consumer rings up the airport, the telephone is going to be answered. Reliability means when they say, "we will

leave at 1530 hours." the aircraft should leave at 1530 hours. Reliability also means that they are not going to delay or cause inconvenience to the consumers on any count as trivial as technical snag when the aircraft has landed the night before, and it is taking off the next morning and that the A checks, B checks and the C checks have not been completed or whatever it is. There is no excuse for delay of the aircraft. These are the fundamental rights that you expect as a consumer for a product like this. Then there is the much-disputed, much-discussed courtesy factor. This is a consumer-oriented service. The customer is always right. You should have basic decency towards another human being and people who are up here should have a high psychological profile of tolerance, of interaction towards other human beings. There has to be a psychological evaluating factor when hostesses, ground staff, air staff, cabin crew are evaluated along with other technical factors. A person who is intolerant of any other human being cannot make a good host or hostess, steward or whatever the hierarchy of ranks may be. You cannot. A small pointer, Arif Bhai, my four-year-old daughter—I am speaking to you of the first-hand experience—was flown in a week ago because her school vacation started in Andhra Pradesh. I am a working mother. I have left my four year child because of compulsion of education. I do not want special preference because I am a Member of Parliament. But this is the plight of millions of working mothers. I compromised on some other commodity at home. I cut corners so that I could afford an air ticket for my child because it was important for me to put the input into her as family life. She would not come by train because there was nobody to accompany her and I was losing time on her vacation. I wanted to be mother to her. So I had her flown from Hyderabad to Delhi. This flight was late. It landed at 11.45 in the night instead of 10.40. The child fell asleep on the aircraft. The first thing she said when she came out of the aircraft was, "Mummy, my teeth were clicking together because I was feeling cold." I said, "Why didn't you ask the air hostess for a blanket?" She said, the pretty lady said, there were not any, and the child was not covered when she was feeling cold by a blanket. The other day, I went to receive my husband at the airport. This is on Friday. On Friday night, I went to receive my husband at the airport. For security reasons, guests who were receiving the passengers, cannot enter the premises of the airport. I am the first one to support this system. But there is no toilet facility outside. I was again with my four-year-old child who cannot use the toilet inside. Two Indian Airlines personnel were walking past. I asked them, "Excuse me. When has t been imposed?" As a matter of conversation, I disclosed that I am a Member of Parliament. I told them, "This child of mine has a problem. She wants to visit the toilet." And they said, "The Ministry is aware when these rules have been passed." And the men continued to walk. As a Member of Parliament, I was restrained from acting rude because of my affiliations to you, to this House, to the concept of being a Member of Parliament. No other passenger would have lumped it. It is basically a service. There is no facation for service, courtesy, manners and decency. I have seen handicapped people boarding aircraft where the hostesses are not helping them. I have seen mothers with infant babies whose breakfast was served on top of the child's head. I have offered to mothers, "I will hold your child. Please finish your breakfast and then take your child back." This has happened repeatedly and there is no excuse for this. No matter what

[Shrimati Renuka Chowdhury]

caste, community, what reservation, in what capacity we have employed hostesses, politeness should become a national symbol and we have to work on that. Why has all this gone wrong? It is because of the philosophy, the motivation factor, in aviation. There is nothing civil about civil aviation. That is what is left about us. It is a pity. It reflects on us as a nation, as a people, as Indians, in the eyes of others Indians, in the eyes of people from other States and in the eyes of people coming from other countries. What is the profile of our civil aviation? We have the Indian Airlines; we have the Air India; we have the Vayudoot; and we have the Pawan Hans. I am the daughter of a man of civil aviation, of aviation. I am the daughter of a man who trained Rajiv Gandhi for his Boeing conversion course. I am the daughter of a man who manned the only institute in the South-East Asia on aviation. (*Interruptin*). And I feel responsible. When we speak of aviation, there is an echoing ring. There is an empathy because it is part of something I have grown up in. Do you know what other peop say about it? Iraq Airways is the same the Indian Airlines. And Iraq Airways call themselves In-Shah-Allah Airlines. यहां से चढ़ो, वहां उतरने से इंशा अल्लाह वहां पहुंच जाओगे ।

श्री सिकन्दर बख्त (मध्य प्रदेश) : खुदा हाफिज ।

श्रीमती रेणुका चौधरी : खुदा हाफिज तो बाद में होगा और उतर गये तो माशा अल्लाह, वह अलग बात है ।

Vaydoot is Yamdoot. Pawan Hans is as extinct as the 'hans'. They are searching for it. These are passenger jokes. It is a reflection of their mood. This is a reflection of what they feel about our airlines. Why is it happening? Government are managers of services and managers are bad. We cannot bring people under bureaucratic pressures and compute them into viable means of revenue resource and not cater to them as individuals. This is a consumer-oriented service and we have to bring them in. We are running our lines with the mentality of a municipal corporation. You cannot have red-tape and dictate to a country. The passenger has the right to change his mind because he is paying for the privilege of flight, if you call it a privilege because it may be his necessity and he or she may have to fly for whatever reasons.

Then, we say that we have rigid bureaucratic procedures so that there is a foolproof system.We say that we have taken all precautions and the best bureaucracy can run the airlines best. I say this with due apologies to the bureaucracy. What happens to the bureaucracy in the hands of a wrong Government? They sur-subvert it. The procedures are laid down by the government. They side-track and circumvent the recommendations of the bureaucracy. What happens? Disaster, chaos and poor Arif Mohd. Khan inherits that. That is what happens. Take the example of A-320. So much has been said about this. But I would like to take the indulgence of the House to let me read from my notes what has happened. Madam, about A-320 so much has been discussed and so much has been disputed. Our concern is not with the airworthiness of the aircraft so much as with the safety factor. Madam, I want to ask the hon. Minister one thing. With regard to A-320 aircraft, as far as I know, they are the state-of-art flying machines, they are fly-by-wire machines, and they need air-conditioned hangers for being serviced—is it a fact or not? Now much damage are we suffering now when they are left outside on the tarmac and when they are left exposed on the runway at a temperature of 41 or 42 degrees?

Let us examine that subsequently. About the safety of these aircraft, what are the procedures that have been followed and what did the previous Government do for this? I am not here to blame you people. We are laden with the problem, all of us; and we all share it. Tomorrow we are going to fly in a A-320 aircraft and you and I are going to be passengers in it. We have also got to know where we are going to land and we have also got to know why we bought it because we have our own privilege and we must have access to information. So we should evaluate why A-320 we have bought; good, bad or ugly, we have to face the fact. Madam, I also want to know another thing from the hon. Minister. Air Marshal Dilbagh Singh Committee recommended the Boeing in 1984 and a letter of intent was issued and a deposit of a million dollars interest-free was made—is that a fact or not? Then in 1985 Shri Rajiv Gandhi came. And nothing is done about this. What happened is, the Civil Service officers objected to this. They objected to this saying—let me quote and I think, this is the Under Secretary who has said:

"In fact, some of the airlines who have placed an order for A-320 aircraft fitted with the V-2500 engines have already changed the option of engines and are going in for some other engines. Keeping in view this fact, the Indian Airlihes should consider whether they would still like to go in for A-320 aircraft fitted with V-2500 engine."

I am just showing how we complain about the bureaucracy. The bureaucracy does its job and it is subverted and is circumvented thus. All right? Subsequent to that, we have the Joint Secretary who says: "It would, therefore, be appropriate to ask Indian Airlines to inform M/s. Airbus Industrie that they wish to defer placing the letter of intent for a period of at least six months. During this period, the Corporation should carry out a detailed techno-economic evaluation of the Airbus A-320 aircraft with the various alternatives available, and in particular, Airbus 300—600 and the Soviet TU-204 aircraft etc. etc." ...(*Interruptions*)...

Then, Madam..(*Time Bell rings*).. I have twenty minutes, Madam.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You started 19 minutes past 4.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: What about the interruptions, Madam?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: I also had interruptions.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: The Financial Adviser says:

"At this stage, even an extension of time by two months has not been agreed to. Although placing of a letter of intent does not legally bind the Corporation, a review of such a decision at a later stage becomes difficult. Perhaps we will be foreclosing the option and the result of the inquiry of the accident, according to the Airbus Industrie, may not be forth coming at a later date. It is difficult to comprehend as to why Airbus Industrie is unable to extend the time at our request. This is not reasonable."

Madam, I quote further from the Financial Adviser:

"It is also a fact that an Airbus A-320 aircraft, which was on a demonstration flight, has also met with an accident and it will be necessary to apply our mind afresh to the whole issue before the option is converted into a letter of intent for 12 Airbus A-320 aircraft. For this, fresh approval of the Ministry of Finance is necessary."

[Shrimati Renuka Chowdhry]

Madam, this is how we have totally subverted our bureaucracy. A point was raised in the Board of the Indian Airlines on the 2nd May, 1988...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Madam, what are those documents from which she is reading out? We want to know how authentic they are...(*Interruptions*)..She has claimed that they are the notings of the Under Secretary, the Financial Adviser, etc...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Yes ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Madam, this is what I want to know. She is reading out from official files ...(*Interruptions*)...In other words, she is admitting that she is quoting from the authentic documents and giving authentic information..(*Interruptions*)...She has said about the noting of the Under Secretary, etc.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Yes, I read out from the noting of the Under Secretary... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Which Under Secretary? Can we know the name?..(*Interruptions*)... From where did she get these files? We must know this...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Madam, if I am allowed, I am perfectly willing to hand over these to her in the presence of the whole House and the Minister is also here to answer and if anyone wants these papers, he can have them ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: This is an official file and you must tell us what this file is about ...(*Interruptions*)...Madam, I am on a point of order...(*Interruptions*)...I am on a point of order....(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Madam, she must tell us what this file is about...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Madam, how is she reading from a file of the Ministry? I want to know this...(*Interruptions*)... Madam, I am on a point of order... (*Interruptions*)...

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Madam, I would like to quote one ruling that was given in Parliament when the famous Mundhra affair was being discussed. The late Mr. Feroze Gandhi had introduced that discussion *and, in the course of the discussion,* he produced and quoted from some correspondence...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: That was in the Lok Sabha... (*Interruptions*)...

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: No, in our place...(*Interruptions*)...In our place,..(*Interruptions*) ..I said, "Parliament", and I know it very well; I cannot forget it... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Madam, rulings of the Lok Sabha are not applicable here. Mr. Feroze Gandhi was in the Lok Sabha ...(*Interruptions*)...

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: I am only saying that he quoted some correspondence... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: I am saying that the decisions of the Lok Sabha are not applicable here...(*Interruptions*)...

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Madam, I rise on a point of order...(*Interruptions*)...I am rising on a point of order...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Madam, what was decided by the

Lok Sabha cannot be discussed here...(*Interruptions*)...

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: I am on a point of order and I think I have to be heard when I rise on a point of order...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: I am on a point of order...(*Interruptions*)...

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: I am on a point of order first and there cannot be a point of order on a point of order...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: On your subject I am on a point of order. Whatever you have raised, I am on a point of order on that...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Madam, I will tell you something. ...(*Interruptions*)...In this House, there is a decision of the Chair that no Minister can raise a point of order. When one of us had earlier raised a point of order, there was a ruling from the Chair that Ministers have no right to raise any point of order and, therefore, you cannot permit his point of order. This is a ruling from the Chair and there can, therefore, be no point of order from Ministers...(*Interruptions*)...I, therefore, appeal to you that the Minister cannot be allowed to raise a point of order. This is the ruling of the Chairman of the House...(*Interruptions*)... This is the ruling of the then Chairman; he had given this ruling...(*Interruptions*)...

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: You need not treat it as a point of order. I would like to make a point of information...

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: The Minister of Finance can well intervene and raise a point of order.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He has become a Minister only six months before. He was only raising points of order all through. Now he is raising a point of information.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: I would like to tell Margaretji, it was a slip of the tongue on my part. I wanted to say "point of information". By mistake I said "point of order"...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Not disorder.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Not at all. I have never done it. You know it very well. I want to point out, I will not quote the House but I will quote a parliamentary procedure by Shakdher. There have been conventions in Parliament and so many times those conventions have been quoted in both Houses of Parliament irrespective of the House in which they have been raised. When Feroze Gandhi was raising the question of the Mundhra episode, he tried to lay a certain document before Parliament. Then someone said, "Let us know from where he is quoting, the source." He was trying to lay on the Table of the House correspondence between the Finance Minister and the Finance Secretary, the latest correspondence exchanged between the Finance Minister and the Finance Secretary. The Chairman asked him from where he was quoting. Feroze Gandhi said, "I am not a fool to quote the source." Look at the ruling that was given. The ruling given was, "So long as the honourable Member who makes any questions is prepared to accept the authenticity of the source," —the ruling was—"even if the document is brought by stealth, I will allow the document to be quoted and if the Member wants it, to be laid on the Table of the House."

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: On a point of order. That means if the document where an

[Shrimati Margaret Alva]

Under Secretary and a Financial Adviser of the Government are quoted...

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: First let me complete what I am saying...

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : Those notings can only be on a Government file because the Under Secretary does not write on my private file. Correspondence or letters exchanged between two people is of a different kind and copies of letters may be marked to anybody. But you are quoting from a file and naming an Under Secretary, a Financial Adviser and so on and so forth, in which case you should say you are quoting a file of the Government of India. You may not give the source. In other words, you are admitting that you are quoting a file of the Government of India.

SHRI P. K. KUNJACHEN (Kerala) : Under what rule is she asking for this information ?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : As a Member she has a right. Mrs. Margaret Alva is a Member of this House and if anybody quotes anything, for information she has a right to ask the source. This goes on everyday. There is nothing new in it.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY : I wanted to finish quoting this and then ask the Minister to further justify or legitimise what I am saying. If these are wrong, it is his responsibility to see and if what I am saying is not correct, I will apologise in this House. I have categorically said it that I am quoting from my notes...

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : How can the notings of a Joint Secretary or a Financial Adviser or an Under Secretary of the Government of India be your private notes ?

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY : It is my right to quote in this House any information that I get from anywhere. I can quote from anywhere...

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : The honourable Member was also giving the names of airlines, the numbers of the aircraft and so on when she was speaking.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : It is a published document.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : You said, "This information has been supplied by the officials of your Ministry."

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : Yes; not my Ministry, your Ministry.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : I am quoting you. When you speak you say "your".

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : They didn't have to give me the files. She is quoting. She said the Under Secretary, the Joint Secretary, the Financial Adviser, who are all officers. These are the names of officers...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : You were relying on your memory. She is relying on her notes. Information has been given by somebody ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY : It is not private, it is not confidential; it is open... (*Interruptions*) I further go on to quote :

"The meeting of the Board of Indian Airlines was on the 2nd of May. Despite the package of four months the advice being given by the Ministry to the Indian Airlines was to carry out a re-appraisal, taking into account some

other aircraft, and in particular some other recommendation..."

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Just a minute. You are reading from some document.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY : No document, noting.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Notes you got from somewhere—from wherever you got I am not asking. But in case the House wants, you can authenticate them ?

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY : Yes, Madam.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : That's okay.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY : It further goes on to say :

"An Airbus A-320 aircraft while on a demonstration flight on the 26th of June 1988 in France met with an accident. The findings of the French Civil Aviation authorities on the cause of this accident have not yet been received. It would be desirable to await their Report before taking a final decision on the acquisition of the additional Airbus A-320 aircraft."

Finally,

"Prior to the signing of the Agreement of the 19 Airbus A-320 aircraft in March 1986, the Ministry of Commerce insisted that there should be an element of counter-trade in the purchase agreement. When this Ministry expressed its inability to do so, the Commerce Ministry obtained a Cabinet order on the subject. Relaxation from this Cabinet order was obtained by our Ministry on condition that Indian Airlines would incorporate a counter-trade clause while exercising its option for the purchase of the additional 12 Airbus A-320 aircraft. This will have to be honoured by the Indian Airlines."

Madam, as I have assured the House, this I can authenticate—what I have said. It is public knowledge. It is available everywhere... *(Interruptions)*

Madam, may I conclude with what I have to say ?... *(Interruptions)* I will now conclude. Please bear with me. I leave the Minister with some thoughts. One is to thoroughly examine the A-320 deal, because if we don't have a support system outside and we subvert the bureaucracy and then we pile the nation with aircraft, we are disputing the safety factor. We have a moral obligation, we have to examine it. And I would not say : write off the aircraft but do develop the necessary support system. Maybe I can leave a suggestion with Arifbhai. During the period when you have grounded the aircraft, use it for re-training your pilots, use it for reinstating confidence among your own flying crew, your hostesses, your ground engineers, use it for infrastructure which is required for the ground support system and take care of the aircraft.

And then the image of Air India—everyone knows the 'Maharaja'—I don't know how many crores were pumped into publicising the new logo. But these have not penetrated into the consumer profile. They have not done enough for service. We have not oriented our staff and personnel to really give the passengers that he or she is really the Maharaja or the Maharani who is flying and is looked after. Professinalise this, Arifbhai...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Are you speaking to him as a brother or as a Minister ?

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY : Minister is my brother. And, Madam, you are in the Chair. Through the Chair, I am asking... *(Interruptions)*

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : I would be extremely happy. It is entirely up to him to be happy or unhappy. But I must remind you that in the House nobody is anybody's brother. We are all hon. Members and hon. Ministers and hon. Deputy Chairman and hon. Chairman.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY : It is a secular spirit, Madam, *Hindu Muslim Bhai Bhai.*

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : I just wanted to remind her. Sometimes she might forget and say 'Sister' or 'Behanji'.

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR : It is a great favour to Arif Sahib.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY : Professionalise the Board. We have the National Airport Authority and we have the International Airport Authority. We should have users' representatives who can sit on these Boards and give far more down-to-earth appreciation or disappreciation of the airline service. Do it as you have in Telephones and in Railways. Let us consider having users' representatives.

Then Centaur hotels. They are not conducive to manage hotels. We are unable to run them and they are only detrimental to our image. We are not competent to deal with the hotel service. Do give them away either to ITDC or to whomsoever you like. Let them run the hotels with an arrangement with the Indian Airlines.

Privatise the concept of air travel. Open out the competition. Charter major trunk routes. Let us give a free hand. Most important of all, I support my colleague Shrimati Margaret Alva, who said about compensation. We have to pay compensation for users' inconvenience. Compensation has to be paid for users' inconvenience because people lose finance. They lose money. They are unable to reach for family functions of death, birth or celebrations. It is an inconvenience for the passengers and they have to be paid for it. Unless you bring about these stringent measures, consider it as a consumer item and bring it under the purview of consumer item, you cannot implement all these things and you are going to be laden with a white elephant. I hope that this contribution of mine will be taken in the spirit that it is and we will all the flying safely to our destinations as soon as the session is over. Thank you.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : I just want to say that we have today seen a part of the file. The files are missing because they are distributed in bits and pieces to different people, to newspapers and to independent press men. That is why, the files are missing. They are divided into bits and selectively released through 'reliable' sources. (*Interruptions*) I am talking of the Minister. I am not talking of you. The files are missing from the Government because they are going everywhere in bits and pieces. She has said that these are all Under Secretaries and Deputy Secretaries who are giving.....

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : Madam, I would like to deny this allegation with all the force at my command. This is a totally baseless allegation. I do not know. It is for the hon. Member to disclose wherefrom she got the information. But I do not know what was in that information which has caused such a great agitation to the otherwise very cool Shrimati Margaret Alva.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : I am only saying that she has quoted Under Secretaries and Deputy Secretaries. I know. I have been in Government. We know how and where the notings are made. I will also say one thing, Madam. I have also been a Minister.

The bureaucracy and the officers are there to advise and record their opinion. We, political people, are elected by the people to take the decisions. It is the political people who take the decisions. (*Interruptions*) The decisions are taken by the Cabinet and by the Government and not by the Deputy Secretary.

5 P.M.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY : Madam, I can swear on anything I hold holy that the Minister has not given me one piece of paper nor has the bureaucracy. I want to to be on record. (*Interruptions*) I am willing to authenticate my own documents which I have got. (*Interruptions*) I am nobody's mouthpiece.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : Madam, I can understand the agitation of Smt. Margaret Alva. But I will appeal to Smt. Renuka Chowdhury not to get agitated about this. I can understand her agitation about the whole thing. But why should you get agitated, Mrs. Renuka Chowdhury ? There is no reason for you to get agitated. (*Interruptions*) Like the other hon. Members. I have also heard whatever she was quoting, and from my memory I can say that most of this is contained in the FIR. Most of this is contained in the FIR. I do not know why you are getting unnecessarily agitated ? (*Interruptions*) I am only speaking from my memory that most of this is contained in the FIR. And about the other point which Mrs. Margaret Alva made that 'suddenly you come with this story that the file is missing', again the fact is mentioned in the FIR. I do not know who are responsible for the missing file. But the moment we came to know about this and we started looking for the papers, immediately one file which was missing was noticed and the fact is mentioned in the FIR....

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : If it does not suit you, it will disappear; if it suits you, it will re-appear.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : No, it is mentioned in the FIR. Your problem is that you do not see carefully the papers. (*Interruptions*).

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Now that matter is closed. We have got the Minister of Finance to give a reply on the price situation.

श्रीमती रेणुका चौधरी : ये पेपर ले करूं टेबल पर या नहीं ?

श्री आरिफ मोहम्मद खान : बिल्कुल कर दो ।

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : You cannot ask the Minister to lay the paper. You can ask the Chair. I am not giving you permission. I will consider it.

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM (Andhra Pradesh) : The other party demanded it.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : It is not for the party to demand. It is for the Chair to permit. I will think of it. What she has quoted, I will look into the record.

The discussion on the working of the Ministry will continue. Now the Minister will reply to the Short Duration Discussion on the price rise. Then at 6 o'clock, there is a statement on the cyclone in Andhra Pradesh. The discussion on the working of the Ministry will continue. I would have to look at the time. If the time is there, the Members will speak.